

DRAFT Minutes

Neighborhood Advisory Commission September 30, 2020



Minutes of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission (NAC) held on Wednesday, September 30, 2020, Virtual Meeting #5 using Microsoft Teams Platform

(MEMBERS) Present: Hannah Moulton Belec, Maureen Eastty, Jana Lynn Granillo, Stephanie Greenfield, Diane Harden, Barb Harris, Matt Heil, Kiyomi Kurooka, Melanie Larimer, Christopher McCabe, Michael McLendon, Daniel Schugurensky, Zoe Stein and Kevin Sweeney.

(MEMBERS) Absent: Richelle Miller

City Staff Speakers Present: Craig Hayton, Community Services Deputy Director, craig_hayton@tempe.gov; Aaron Peterson, Strategic Management Analyst and Retreat Facilitator, aaron_peterson@tempe.gov; Terry Piekarz, Director of the Municipal Department, terrance_piekarz@tempe.gov; Tara Ford, Deputy Director of the Municipal Utilities Department, tara_ford@tempe.gov; Shannon Reed, Public Information Officer, shannon_reed@tempe.gov; Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist; Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Manager

Additional City Staff Present: Julie Hietter and Shawn Wagner, both with Community Services Administration, Stephen White, Municipal Utilities Division

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m. by Chair Belec

Agenda Item 2 – Attendance Roll Call

Present: Hannah Moulton Belec, Maureen Eastty, Jana Lynn Granillo, Stephanie Greenfield, Diane Harden, Barb Harris, Matt Heil, Kiyomi Kurooka, Melanie Larimer, Christopher McCabe, Michael McLendon, Daniel Schugurensky and Kevin Sweeney.

Absent: Richelle Miller, Zoe Stein (during attendance roll call vote)

Agenda Item 3 – Introduction of new NAC member

Kevin Sweeney, the new NAC member from zip code 85284, introduced himself and shared that he is an 18-year resident of Tempe who resides in the Estate La Colina Neighborhood Association. Commissioner Sweeney is looking forward to being proactive and adding value to his neighborhood. Due to meeting time constraints, Chair Belec advised that other members introduce themselves during the October 17 Retreat meeting Ice Breaker activity.

Agenda Item 4 – Public Comment

None.

Agenda Item 5 – Review and approval of September 2, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Motion: Commissioner Harris made a motion to approve the September 2, 2020 minutes as presented.

Second: Commissioner McLendon

Result: *The motion passed with a unanimous vote of those present 14-0.*

Commission Member Ayes: Hannah Moulton Belec, Maureen Eastty, Jana Lynn Granillo, Stephanie Greenfield, Diane Harden, Barb Harris, Matt Heil, Kiyomi Kurooka, Melanie Larimer, Christopher McCabe, Michael McLendon, Daniel Schugurensky, Zoe Stein and Kevin Sweeney.

Absent: Richelle Miller

Agenda Item 6 – Water Rate Study Results Presentation

Municipal Utilities Director Terry Piekarz and Municipal Utilities Deputy Director Tara Ford presented the recommendations of the 2020 Water Rate Study. The city conducts the study every two years and Neighborhood Advisory Commission member feedback regarding the proposed rate changes will be communicated to Mayor and Council.

The policy guidance features a cost-based approach using advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) to achieve water conservation and water efficiency along with flood irrigation cost recovery. There are **four components of Rate Study Process:**

- **Revenue requirements** – review operating costs, capital costs, financial policies
- **Cost allocation** – evaluate available data, establish classes, identify methodology, compare results to current revenue
- **Rate design** – evaluate objectives, identify structures, set parameters, identify customer impacts
- **Communication** – explain process/data, adjustment drivers, national trends and local practices

Municipal Utilities Deputy Director Tara Ford emphasized that the city engages customers using a number and variety of methods and approaches. New for this Rate Study, a community stakeholder group was formed which included multiple water customer classifications with representatives from low income families, neighborhood associations, businesses and industry. Four working sessions were hosted with ten members each, representing multiple customer classifications. A public webinar was held in June.

Approximately 3,346 large volume residential customers reach Tier 5 water usage at least one month every year. Outreach efforts included these customers, 62 then enrolled in the water efficiency certification pilot program. Participants report being happy with the program which will conclude in March 2021.

Summary of Rate Study Recommendations:

- A 5.5% annual water revenue increase per year over the next ten years (single revenue increase followed by review)
- Adjust proportional cost recovery for each customer classification
- Adjust monthly service charge to increase fixed cost recovery
- A 9.7% flood irrigation revenue increase – required to maintain 50% cost recovery
- No change required in wastewater revenue at this time

Next Steps:

- Public Outreach – compile public input and provide to Council
- December 3, 2020 Regular Council meeting agenda, to consider rate adoption
- If adopted as recommended, rate changes would become effective January 4, 2021

Commissioner comments and questions:

Why aren't there more large volume residential customers participating in the pilot program? A: Those that are participating are very interested, attentive and engaged. Other large volume residential customers express appreciation for the outreach and the information but it is not their top priority and some prefer using the WaterSmart portal to monitor their own usage.

Will the increase in flood irrigation pose an undue burden on low income areas? A: We are focused on customer demand and usage. Flood irrigation is a service, our portion is the maintenance of the system. We do not track demographics for those customers choosing to receive flood irrigation and it's important to note that flood irrigation is not billed monthly, it is billed every six months.

The Neighborhood Advisory Commission did not opt to provide "commission as a whole feedback" on the proposed rate changes.

Agenda Item 7 – Rio Salado Master Plan

The Rio Salado and Beach Park Masterplan was formally adopted by Council in 2018. The Masterplan recognized that developing the Rio Salado Park as a first-class destination and local amenity required a long-term commitment to fund, build and maintain it into the future. This visionary 30-page plan document highlighted distinct areas around Town Lake presenting potential opportunities for a variety of passive and active future amenities. Options include recreation, relaxation, economic diversity, social engagement, ecological exploration, education, competition and more.

This plan document established principles (bulleted below) allowing for diversity in design and planning while maintaining consistent vision and level of quality.

- Provide public access and ownership
- Expand and strengthen connectivity
- Create shade
- Unite public & private spaces
- Program to attract wide variety of users, activities, interests
- Emphasize sustainability for environment, economics, operations & maintenance and social benefits

Craig Hayton, Community Services Deputy Director explained that he is currently co-leading the Parks and Recreation Master Plan along with Community Services Deputy Director Shawn Wagner. They will be examining and exploring answers to the question of what is the right balance of events and park activities? Included in the Rio Salado Master Plan were twelve different defined activity zones including cultural, athletics, and entertainment, each with programming possibilities identified. On the south side of the lake, there are five zones known as Eco South/West, Cultural, Entertainment South Shore, Riviera South and Eco South/East. There are seven zones on the north side of the lake defined as Eco North/West, Recreation (Adventure), Entertainment North Shore, Athletics, Marina, Riviera North, Eco North/East.

The implementation strategies and funding phase is now underway with a focus on public private partnership opportunities which could include private development, public/private partnerships, naming rights and sponsorships. Each activity zone was scored and prioritized by gauging both improvement impacts and improvement potential. A Request for Information (RFI) was prepared with categories including land, aerial, water and category support. Restrooms and parking were noted as especially important priorities in category support no matter what new amenities ultimately go in.

Commissioners wanted to know more about the evaluation tools that will be used to make decisions. Craig offered that there are a number of considerations including the survey results (survey is open through October 1), whether the proposed amenity serves a broad segment of the population or is more limited and whether the activity can be done all year round or summer only and what folks are interested in funding. Additional research and information gathering will be required.

Some commissioner input and questions included:

Residents of this area are excited about some development but not wanting to live across from a carnival!

Traffic in this area is not well controlled, parking and sanitation are lacking - need to ramp up maintenance, there is always lots of trash and bird litter

Will there be a fee for some activities? A: Yes. There could be a sharing model for some.

Where is security in budgeting process? More people coming to this area will necessitate more security and Police Department staffing

This plan looks expensive

Having a secure place to drop off bikes would be nice

Have you considered a shuttle from light rail?

A dog park would be cool

Child friendly art or art you can engage with

Need more shade

Chair Belec urged any members who had not taken the survey yet to do so immediately following the NAC meeting. Craig agreed and reminded members it closes October 1 and is available at tempe.gov/forum. Next steps are a City Council presentation on November 5 followed by a Request for proposal to design, build, operate and a Request for proposal to complete conceptual design.

Agenda Item 8 – Communication/Media Relations Team overview and discussion

Shannon Reed, Public Information Officer (PIO), provided an informational overview of the Communication and Media Relations Division describing what they do, their varied approaches and how NAC may be able to be of assistance. The Division uses the disciplines of advertising, public relations, marketing, strategy and branding to meet the needs of specific city programs, events, services and facilities, as well as to serve the City of Tempe holistically. Their communications toolbox includes a mix of digital, print, events, billboards, radio, promotional items and occasionally use of Pandora.

They have over 100,000 social media followers with 15,000 main page facebook likes and boast the best engagement rate of surrounding city main accounts. The city website attracts 5.5 million pageviews annually with the majority of site visitors coming to get precise information or to perform a specific function. The top five city web pages are home, careers, city court, coronavirus (launched March 13, 2020) and police – listed in most popular order. Shannon shared that 85% of social video watchers do so with the sound off, this is important information to consider when crafting videos and is the reason for more graphics, pictures and illustrations being used. Shannon added

that she is the PIO serving the Neighborhood Services Office and expressed enthusiasm and a willingness to consider neighborhood-centric story ideas from NAC members which can be emailed to her attention at shannon_reed@tempe.gov. She also encouraged them to help forward out to their circles and amplify city messaging, particularly when it is about topics, issues, meetings, events, surveys, activities and policies they are curious about or familiar with and those they are passionate about.

Agenda Item 9 – Review and discussion of 2021 Neighborhood Award categories, applications and rater forms

Nomination forms along with rater forms for each category (Neighbor of the Year, Property Beautification and Alley Upkeep) that Neighborhood Advisory Commission members select the honorees for were provided in member meeting packets. Elizabeth Thomas reminded members that following the last awards cycle, there was group discussion regarding wanting to ensure that there were not conflicts or confusion regarding the Sustainability Award categories (Residential, Business and Non-Profit) nor the newest category of Water Conservation/Lush Landscape with NAC's long existing Property Beautification category.

Neighborhood Services staff had a Teams meeting with involved staff to discuss each respective award category and basic parameters for same. Water Conservation is looking at alternative names to Lush Landscape for their award as it is intended to honor and recognize residents who are adhering to the seven principles of xeriscape and the original award name proved a bit confusing. The Property Beautification Award winners selected by NAC have ranged from well done xeriscape to attractive, welcoming lush and mature landscape as well as celebration of well-maintained properties and holiday displays through this same broad category.

There was brief discussion regarding whether Property Beautification honorees should be sustainable and perhaps limited to low water use and xeriscape. It was noted that this potential change would limit grassy front lawns and flood irrigated properties, both have been recognized in the past along with older properties with grass that are being restored or fixed up. After more brief discussion, it was agreed that an additional criteria bullet labelled as Sustainability Efforts be added to the Property Beautification form allowing for consideration of that element when present but not eliminating consideration of properties with grass.

Agenda Item 10 - Commission business items

- ❖ **2020 Retreat Planning and Preparation-Aaron Peterson, Strategic Management Analyst, Retreat Facilitator** – Due to meeting time constraints, Aaron Peterson introduced himself and very briefly shared his screen to show a process document he prepared illustrating how the commission's DRAFT 2021 goals could be further discussed during the Retreat to help refine them and identify accompanying strategies, tactics, operations as well as opportunities for alignment with Council's Strategic Priorities. Aaron reiterated his recommendation that there be no more than five goals, some will be inward facing while others are outward facing and most should be measurable. He asked that answers to homework questions be short and specific with careful thought given to what results or outcomes are desired and consideration of how goals might be measured. How will you define success?
- ❖ **Working Group Update**
Chair Belec reported that she met with Commissioners Harden and Granillo to discuss the October 17 Retreat and desired outcomes. Through this meeting, the two homework questions were identified – 1. What do you want to see happen through the commission in the next year? and 2. Why?

- ❖ **Continued identification and refinement of 2021 goals, strategies and objectives**
No further discussion at this meeting.
- ❖ **Review and decision regarding member leave of absence request**
Due to the meeting being rushed, this item was inadvertently missed and not discussed.

Agenda Item 11 – Getting Arizona Involved in Neighborhoods (G.A.I.N.) Update

There was an abbreviated update due to meeting time constraints. Staff shared that as always connecting and communicating are being encouraged but in-person gatherings are not encouraged for G.A.I.N. this year. Neighborhood Services along with the Police Department hosted a virtual G.A.I.N. Kick-Off meeting and Idea Exchange for neighborhood and hoa leaders and block watch captains on September 22. A powerpoint filled with suggestions for connecting was shown and fellow leaders talked through ideas with each other and staff. Many neighborhoods are planning to participate in collection drives to benefit those most vulnerable in our community using the tag line of Tempe GAINS by Giving. NAC members were encouraged to visit the G.A.I.N. website at www.tempe.gov/GAIN to view videos of the PD Chief, FD Chief and Mayor Woods and check out the powerpoint and resources available.

Agenda Item 12 – Census 2020 Update

There was no Census 2020 update provided due to meeting time constraints.

Agenda Item 13 – Proposed Future Agenda Items

Meeting packet contained a Proposed Future Agenda Items document which is regularly updated as more information becomes available. No additional items were shared at this meeting.

Agenda Item 14 – Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Prepared by: Elizabeth Thomas